

# QUANTIFYING HOPE

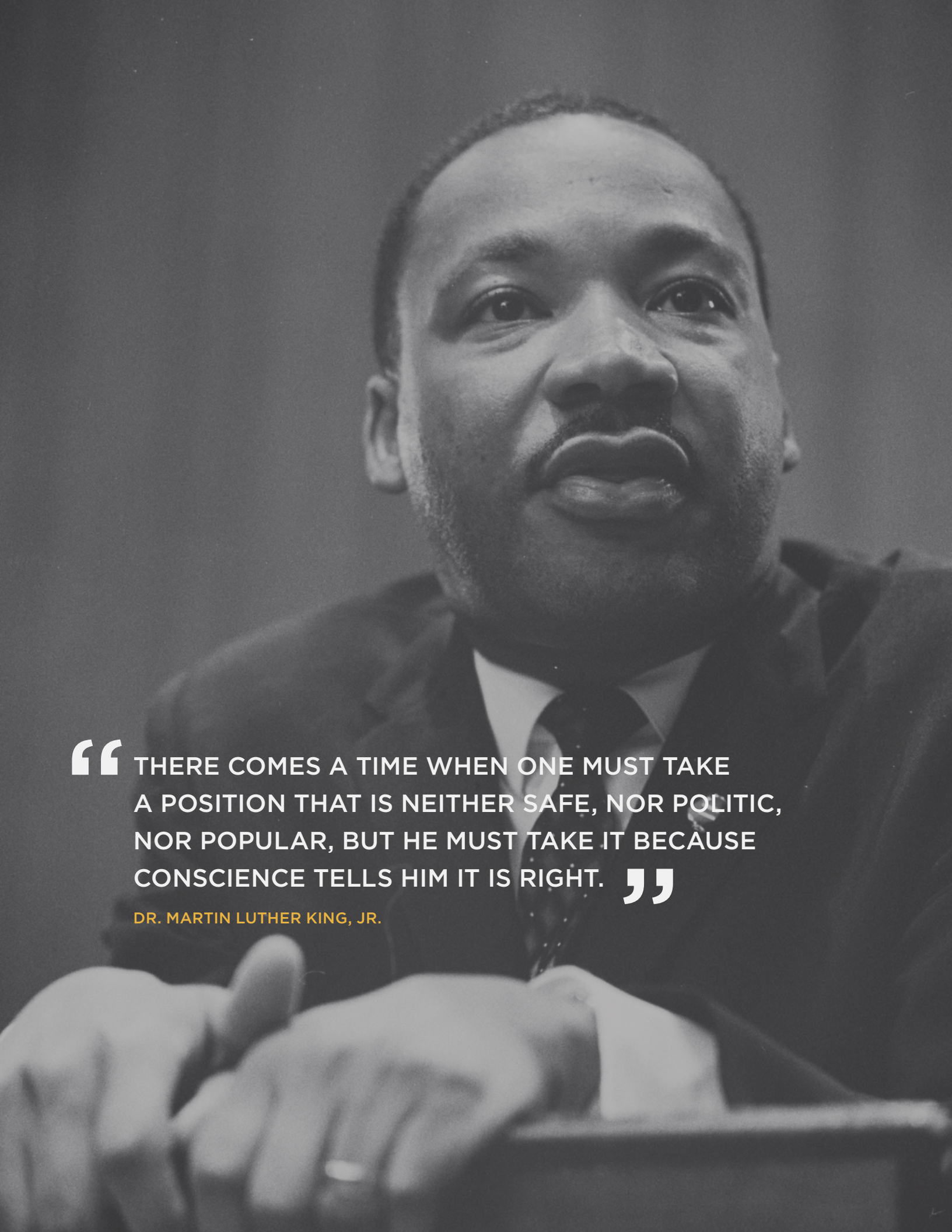
PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS

2015



**BMA**funders.org



A black and white photograph of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He has a mustache and is looking slightly upwards and to the right with a serious expression. His hands are visible in the foreground, resting on a podium. The background is dark and out of focus.

“ THERE COMES A TIME WHEN ONE MUST TAKE  
A POSITION THAT IS NEITHER SAFE, NOR POLITIC,  
NOR POPULAR, BUT HE MUST TAKE IT BECAUSE  
CONSCIENCE TELLS HIM IT IS RIGHT. ”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



## INTRODUCTION

### IN 2014, THE WORLD BORE WITNESS TO

the highly publicized killings of Black boys and men: Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri; Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York; and Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio. Collectively, these deaths, coupled with disparities across a range of issues, poignantly symbolize the larger realities that Black men and boys face: regular experiences with racial profiling, disproportionate rates of arrest and incarceration, lack of educational opportunities, and inadequate job prospects.

As deep as these problems may be, many philanthropists, government leaders, and citizens have been working for the past two decades to develop solutions. For example, in 1992 the W.K. Kellogg Foundation created the African American Men and Boys Initiative, with other major foundations following suit over the years. In 2013, more than two dozen foundation CEOs and presidents formed the Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color. And perhaps most prominently, in 2014, President Barack Obama launched My Brother's Keeper, a White House initiative to improve the lives of young males of color.

Still, the deaths of Brown, Garner, and Rice, among others, catalyzed a new wave of national attention to the longstanding structural inequities that have resulted in decades of poor life outcomes for Black men and boys. Indeed, the maturing #BlackLivesMatter movement underscores Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s still-relevant call to recognize the "fierce urgency of now" and to work toward a more just and equitable society for all.

Amidst these recent activities and movement-building efforts, much remains to be done for us to move from increased attention to structural inequities to increased investment and innovation that creates lasting progress in social and economic opportunities for Black men.

It is against this backdrop that we publish this research brief, shining a light on the ways in which foundations are supporting pathways to achievement and changing the narrative for Black men and boys. In this report, a follow-up to *Where Do We Go From Here? Philanthropic Support for Black Men and Boys*, we revisit foundation funding in support of Black men and boys, providing an updated analysis on funding trends and a closer look at recent initiatives in the field.

## LEARN MORE



*Where Do We Go From Here? Philanthropic Support for Black Men and Boys*, published in October 2012, provides baseline funding data and documents the wide range of foundations.



*Building a Beloved Community: Strengthening the Field of Black Male Achievement* is based on interviews with 50 field leaders. Released in May 2014, the report maps the landscape of work in this area and offers recommendations for moving the work forward.

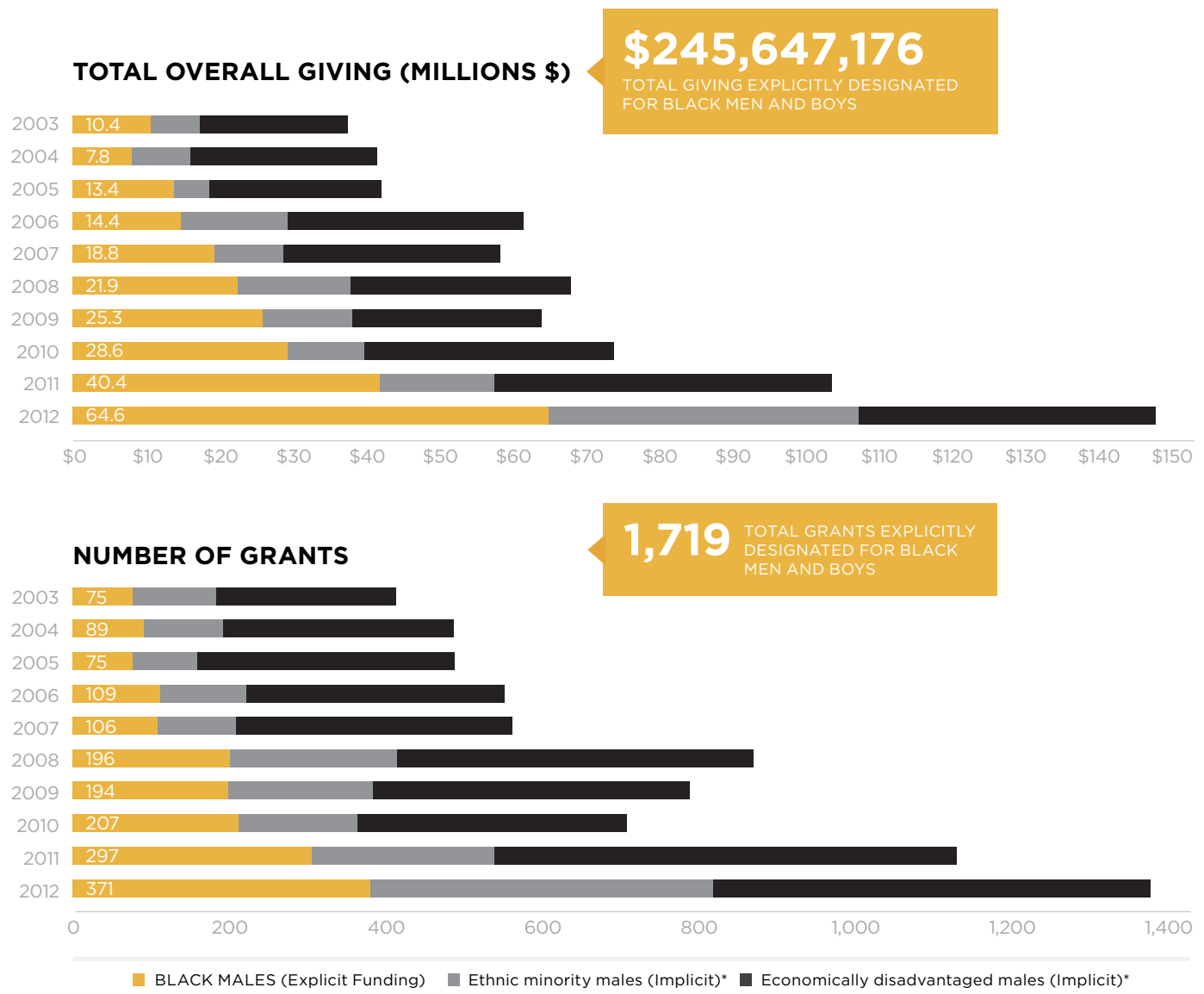
**BMAfund.org** lifts up the role of philanthropy in supporting Black men and boys. Launched in March 2013, the site features data showing who's funding what, where. With a broad array of resources, the site strives to facilitate engagement, collaboration, and strategic decision making among funders and other stakeholders.

## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS

Foundation funding to benefit Black men and boys totaled \$64.6 million in 2012, up from \$40.4 million the previous year and continuing an upward trend. Although slightly fewer foundations made grants in 2012 compared to 2011 (98 versus 114), the average grant size increased from \$136,087 in 2011 to \$174,216 in 2012.

As grantmaking explicitly designated for Black males increased, some giving patterns also shifted. Funding for education and human services continued to be the primary major issue areas, while grants for public affairs increased dramatically. Top recipients were no longer primarily educational institutions, but rather national civic, policy, and advocacy organizations.

## FUNDING TRENDS FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS, 2003–2012



\*A portion of these grant dollars likely benefited Black men and boys

**\$64,634,022**

GRANT \$ EXPLICITLY  
DESIGNATED FOR  
BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN 2012

In addition, some portion of the following grants likely benefited Black men and boys:

**\$42,482,577:** Grant \$ for boys and men of color

**\$40,621,477:** Grant \$ for economically disadvantaged males

EXPLICIT FUNDING  
FOR BLACK MALES  
**MORE THAN  
DOUBLED**  
SINCE 2010

**OVER HALF**  
OF ALL FUNDING EXPLICITLY  
DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MALES  
IN THE PAST 10 YEARS TOOK  
PLACE IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

## METHODOLOGY

The data presented in this report are based primarily on Foundation Center's annual grants set. The set includes all grants of \$10,000 or more awarded to organizations by 1,000 of the largest U.S. foundations. It accounts for more than half of the total grant dollars awarded by the universe of independent, corporate, community, and grantmaking operating foundations. The sample excludes grants, fellowships, and awards made directly to individuals; grants paid by private foundations to U.S. community foundations (to avoid double counting of dollars); and loans or program-related investments.

Grantmaking explicitly designated for Black males is captured based on information provided by the foundation, evidence within the grant description, and/or the mission and activities of the recipient organization.

However, grantmaking that benefits Black males may not necessarily take place through a portfolio that specifically focuses on this population. For example, grantmaking related

to school discipline or criminal justice reform likely benefits Black males. In addition, grants benefiting "men of color" or "at-risk boys" may implicitly benefit Black males but cannot be coded as explicitly benefiting Black males. Therefore, the analysis likely underrepresents giving benefiting Black males.\*

To ensure that the data were as accurate and comprehensive as possible, Foundation Center contacted members of the Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color, as well as the top funders for Black men and boys in previous years, and asked them to review their grantmaking data for accuracy. Nineteen foundations responded, providing additional population data for more than 400 grants.

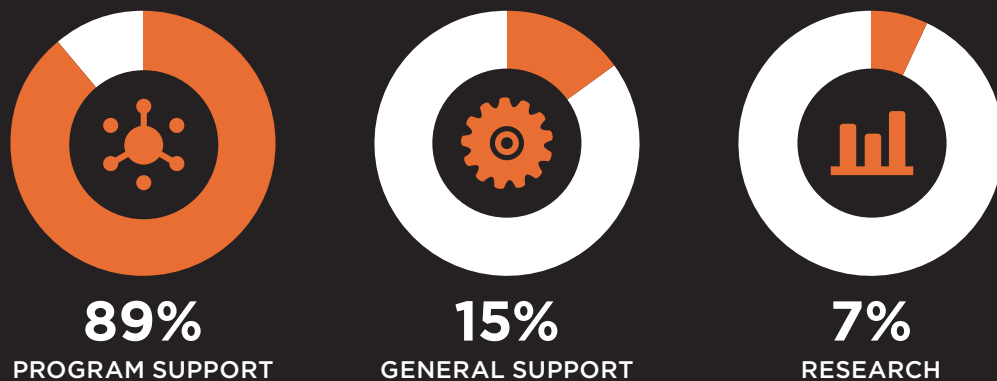
\*Grants identifying an explicit benefit for Black males as well as other population groups (e.g., Black and Latino males) were included in the analysis as explicit funding for Black males, as there is no good way to determine what percentage of these grants served each group.

## GRANT DOLLARS EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS BY ISSUE AREA, 2012



\*Includes science and technology, social sciences, and religion

### TYPE OF SUPPORT, 2012\*\*



\*\*Percentages reflect grant dollars. Grants may occasionally be for multiple types of support and would therefore be counted more than once. Roughly 5 percent of grant dollars could not be coded for a specific type of support, because foundations did not provide this information.

## GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS OF GRANT DOLLARS EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS, 2012\*

### MIDWEST: 9%

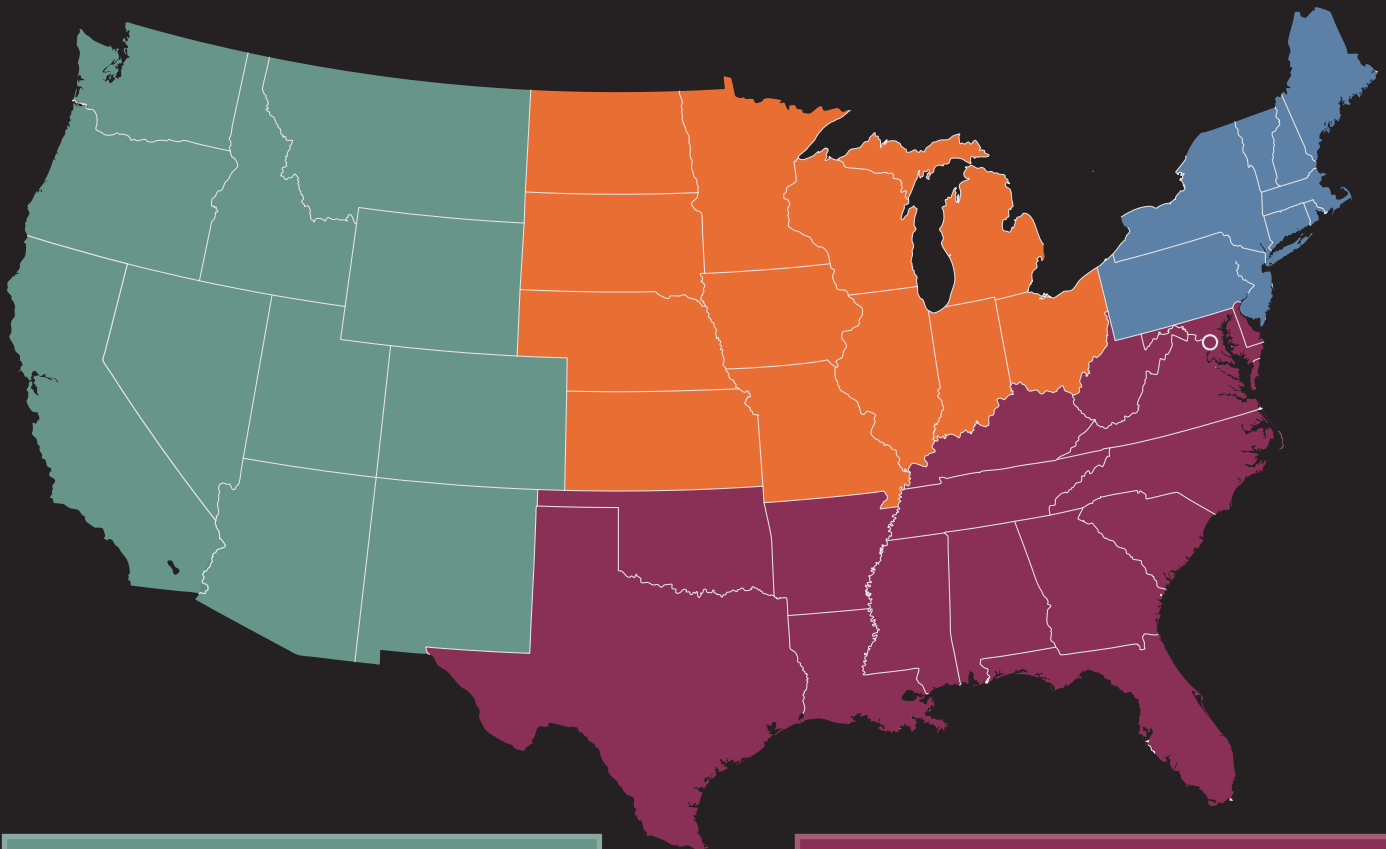
\$5,998,437 | 67 GRANTS

39% OF FUNDING WENT TO  
ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN  
**ILLINOIS**

### NORTHEAST: 45%

\$29,076,010 | 104 GRANTS

77% OF FUNDING WENT TO  
ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN  
**NEW YORK**



### WEST: 20%

\$12,956,407 | 113 GRANTS

98% OF FUNDING WENT TO  
ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN  
**CALIFORNIA**

### SOUTH: 26%

\$16,603,168 | 87 GRANTS

42% OF FUNDING WENT TO  
ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN  
**WASHINGTON, DC**

\*Geographic information is based on recipient location. Funding may support local, regional, or national projects.

TOP 10 FOUNDATIONS BY GIVING EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS, 2012

1	Open Society Foundations.....	\$16,209,804	MOST GRANTS DISTRIBUTED (52)
2	W.K. Kellogg Foundation .....	12,584,703	
3	Bloomberg Philanthropies .....	10,354,997	
4	Heinz Endowments .....	2,738,020	
5	California Community Foundation .....	2,713,463	W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION DOES NOT HAVE A SPECIFIC BLACK MALE FOCUS BUT PROMOTES RACIAL EQUITY AND ADDRESSES STRUCTURAL RACISM THROUGHOUT ITS GRANTMAKING
6	Ford Foundation .....	2,450,000	
7	Marguerite Casey Foundation .....	1,790,000	
8	Skillman Foundation.....	1,335,000	
9	Chicago Community Trust .....	1,275,000	THE SKILLMAN FOUNDATION MANDATES THAT MANY OF ITS GRANTS SERVE A MINIMUM OF 50% AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND/OR LATINO BOYS
10	California Endowment .....	1,262,608	

FOUNDATION TYPE, 2012

98 FOUNDATIONS GAVE GRANTS EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS	61	Independent Foundations	\$57,829,386
	19	Corporate Foundations	\$1,086,000
	16	Community Foundations	\$5,473,636
	2	Operating Foundations	\$245,000



JOHNATHON HENNINGER, QEYNO LABS



# TOP 10 RECIPIENTS OF FOUNDATION GIVING EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS, 2012

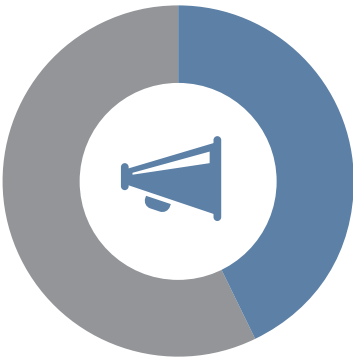
1	<b>Fund for Public Schools .....</b>	<b>\$7,235,304</b>
2	<b>Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City ..</b>	<b>6,584,330</b>
3	<b>MDRC.....</b>	<b>3,770,667</b>
4	NAACP .....	2,800,000
5	Advancement Project .....	2,250,000
6	Oakland Unified School District.....	2,125,000
7	Root Cause.....	1,850,000
8	Children’s Defense Fund .....	1,350,000
9	PolicyLink.....	1,250,000
10	Robert Morris University.....	1,100,000

**TOP 3**  
RECIPIENTS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH NEW YORK CITY’S YOUNG MEN’S INITIATIVE

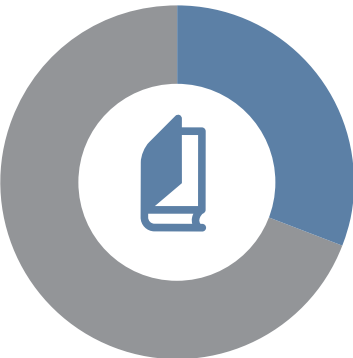
**TOP 10**  
RECIPIENTS RECEIVED 47% OF ALL FUNDING EXPLICITLY DESIGNATED FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS

**5 OF THE TOP 10**  
RECIPIENTS ARE BLACK-LED ORGANIZATIONS; 3 OF THE 5 BLACK-LED ORGANIZATIONS ARE LED BY WOMEN

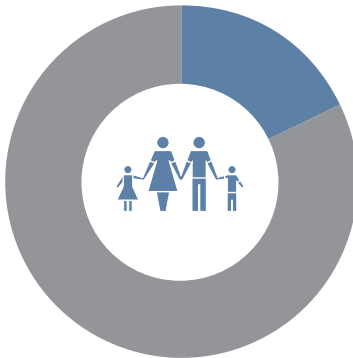
## RECIPIENT TYPE, 2012\*



**43%**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
ORGANIZATIONS



**31%**  
EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS



**18%**  
HUMAN SERVICE  
ORGANIZATIONS

\*Percentages reflect grant dollars. An additional 5 percent went to arts and culture organizations, and 2 percent went to hospitals and health care organizations. The remaining 1 percent of grant dollars went to science organizations and religious institutions.

## FOUNDATION INVESTMENTS

# A GLIMPSE AT POST-2012 INITIATIVES

### THE ANALYSIS PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT

focuses on foundation funding in 2012, the most recent year for which comprehensive data are available. Since then, a number of major initiatives and investments have been announced. A sampling of these investments are described here.

Eleven foundations joined the federal **My Brother's Keeper (MBK)** initiative—California Endowment, Atlantic and Bloomberg Philanthropies, Annie E. Casey, Ford, John S. and James L. Knight, Nathan Cummings, Robert Wood Johnson, W.K. Kellogg, and Open Society Foundations, and Kapor Center for Social Impact—announcing investments totaling at least \$200 million over five years. The Skillman Foundation also committed \$2 million to support MBK work in Detroit.

Corporations have made substantial commitments: AT&T Foundation pledged \$18 million for mentoring; Citi Foundation put \$10 million into creating a youth volunteering program; UBS America launched a five-year, \$10 million initiative for college success; JPMorgan Chase & Co will expand The Fellowship Initiative to three cities with a \$10 million commitment; and Prudential Foundation committed \$13 million for technical assistance and impact investments.

The **Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA)** awarded \$10,000 capacity-building grants to 20 organizations. In addition, through the BMA Social Innovator Accelerator, CBMA supported seven high-potential leaders to grow their work and demonstrate their impact. The 2015 cohort will receive \$25,000 in general operating support and \$150,000 in one-on-one communications and sustainability consulting, plus opportunities to showcase their work to

funders. CBMA, now an independent nonprofit organization, will continue to be supported with a lead \$10 million grant from the Open Society Foundations over the next five years.

Founded in 2012 in partnership with the Open Society Foundations, the **Echoing Green BMA Fellowship** awards budding social entrepreneurs in the field of Black male achievement a two-year, \$80,000 stipend, plus access to leadership development, networking gatherings, technical support, and pro bono partnerships.

In 2013, **BMe**, an initiative of the Knight Foundation, spun off into a standalone organization. With a network of more than 10,000 community builders and 100 Black male BMe leaders, the nonprofit has raised more than \$5.5 million to date, including \$3.6 million from the Knight Foundation and \$1.8 million from the Open Society Foundations and Heinz Endowments, plus contributions from corporate sponsors and individuals.

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's** Forward Promise initiative awarded \$11.5 million focused on promoting the health and success of boys and young men of color. Grants supported 10 nonprofits engaged in groundbreaking work, six city-based partnerships employing collaborative approaches to sustainable interventions, and four rural communities in the South and Southwest.

In 2013, the **California Endowment** committed an unprecedented \$50 million to its Sons & Brothers campaign. The seven-year campaign focuses on “pivotal moments that signal a young person is veering off track”—third grade reading and chronic absence, suspensions and early truancy, and justice system involvement.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT

**BMA**funders.org

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# WHAT ABOUT WOMEN AND GIRLS OF COLOR?

## **WITH ATTENTION FOCUSED ON BLACK MEN AND BOYS,**

and boys and men of color more broadly, some observers have asked what foundations are doing to support women and girls of color, who face daunting challenges of their own. In 2012, foundations awarded \$125 million for activities supporting women and girls of color. This is consistent with past funding trends, showing \$102 million in 2010 and \$123 million in 2011. While funding for women and girls of color has historically outpaced that of men and boys of color, in recent years the figures have become comparable to one another, given increases in funding for men and boys of color. Strikingly, both groups receive a small portion of the overall philanthropic pie, which totaled more than \$52 billion in 2012.

Of note, nearly three-quarters of funding for women and girls of color appears in Foundation Center's database as benefiting women and girls of color generally, leaving us with little information about funding flows to specific ethnic/racial groups. Foundation Center's partnership with the Campaign for Black Male Achievement has allowed us to conduct outreach with foundations to achieve more accurate information about specific beneficiary groups. A similar effort with grants

focused on women and girls of color would allow for a better assessment of funding streams.

Allison Brown, program officer for the racial justice portfolio at the Open Society Foundations, notes that Open Society aims to be inclusive in its racial justice strategy in recognition of the nuanced ways in which the intersection of gender and race affects disparities in arenas such as education, the criminal justice system, and the workforce. "Girls and women of color face significant barriers to opportunity, too, including in school discipline, health care, and accumulation of wealth." Ultimately, My Brother's Keeper and related efforts focused on boys and men of color, says Brown, "kicked the door open for addressing racial justice in a gender-focused way." Open Society is developing a grantmaking portfolio that supports women and girls of color in a "thoughtful and caring" manner, while continuing to support boys and men of color in explicit ways.

Similarly, C. Nicole Mason, PhD, director of CR2PI, a research and policy center at the New York Women's Foundation, argues that there needs to be deep-level thinking and strategy about the significance of the impact of the intersections of race, class, and gender in the lives of both groups. "The fates of Black men and boys and Black women and girls are inextricably linked," she comments. "In building more connected communities across the country, we need to identify gaps in services, examine the conditions that impede rather than support success, and leverage resources and opportunities for partnership and collaboration."



## FOUNDATION INVESTMENTS

# A GLIMPSE AT OUTCOMES

As grantmaking to improve the life outcomes of Black men and boys has increased, many in the field are asking: What works? How are the lives of Black males changing for the better through these investments? And how can future investments be leveraged for maximum impact?

To address these questions, philanthropic organizations including Atlantic Philanthropies, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation have invested in a three-year, \$10 million national collaborative called **RISE (Research, Integration, Strategy, and Evaluation) for Boys and Men of Color**.

As RISE begins to document the evidence base for this work more comprehensively, here's a snapshot of promising results from several recent evaluations. For more information on these and other initiatives, visit [bmafunders.org/in-the-field/](http://bmafunders.org/in-the-field/).

## BLOOM

In May 2012, the California Community Foundation launched **BLOOM** (Building a Lifetime of Options and Opportunities for Men), a five-year, multimillion-dollar initiative to redirect Black male youth that are—or have been—in the Los Angeles County probation system onto a path of education and employment.

### SELECT 2012 GRANTS

- California Community Foundation: \$90,000 (2 grants) to Los Angeles Urban League
- California Community Foundation: \$75,000 to Los Angeles Brotherhood Crusade
- California Community Foundation: \$75,000 to Community Coalition

### OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

- By the end of its second year, 449 young men were enrolled in BLOOM initiative programs. More than 72 percent indicated that they attended school regularly—an increase of more than 17 percent from the first year.
- 89 percent of BLOOM youth had not been suspended or expelled from school.
- 88 percent of BLOOM youth had not violated the terms of their probation supervision.

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Source: **Evaluation of the California Community Foundation's Building a Lifetime of Options and Opportunities for Men (BLOOM) Initiative: Year Two Evaluation Report 2013-2014**

## YOUNG MEN'S INITIATIVE

The **Young Men's Initiative**, launched in August 2011, is New York City's comprehensive effort to address disparities between young Black and Latino men and their peers. The initiative engages more than 20 city agencies and supports programs and policies to bolster young men in the areas of education, employment, health, and justice.

### SELECT 2012 GRANTS

- Bloomberg Philanthropies: \$6.6 million (3 grants) to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
- Open Society Foundations: \$7.2 million to the Fund for Public Schools

### OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

- The Expanded Success Initiative (ESI) invested in 40 high schools—reaching 4,000 freshmen—that are committed to the success of Black and Latino students.
- All 35 non-exempt mayoral agencies removed the question about criminal record on employment application forms.
- The CUNY Fatherhood Academy graduated its first cohort of 22 fathers: 13 were placed into jobs, four earned a GED, and six enrolled in community college.

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Source: **NYC Young Men's Initiative Annual Reports, 2012 and 2013**





## OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 2010, **Oakland Unified School District** became the first school district in the nation to create a department that specifically addresses the needs of African-American male students. Its signature Manhood Development Program is an academic mentoring model designed and implemented by African-American males for African-American males.

### SELECT 2012 GRANTS

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: \$2 million to Oakland Unified School District
- Walter and Elise Haas Fund: \$125,000 to Oakland Unified School District

### OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

- The Manhood Development Program grew from 50 students in three schools in 2011 to 450 students in 17 schools by 2014.
- The average GPA for students in the program is 2.1 compared to 1.7 for those who are not in the program.
- The model was replicated in Minneapolis Public Schools in fall 2014, and discussions are underway in other school districts.

Source: **The Black Sonrise: Oakland Unified School District's Commitment to Address and Eliminate Institutionalized Racism**

## ADVANCEMENT PROJECT

**Advancement Project** is a multi-racial civil rights organization working to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline through advocacy. Since its inception in 1999, Advancement Project has partnered with grassroots organizations to change school discipline policies in nine locales impacting anywhere from 27,000 to 1.1 million students per site (median of 500,000 per site).

### SELECT 2012 GRANTS

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: \$2.3 million to Advancement Project
- California Wellness Foundation: \$150,000 to Advancement Project

### OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

- The organization created a scaling model, ActionCamps, which trained more than 800 leaders from more than 30 states to create policy wins in their communities.
- By capitalizing on local policy wins, momentum was built for national policy reform resulting in the Safe Schools Initiative by the Departments of Justice and Education, federal guidelines on discipline and discrimination, and inclusion of discipline reform in the White House My Brother's Keeper initiative.

Source: **Investing in Black Male Achievement, Advancement Project prospectus**

## VOICES FROM THE FIELD

# MAYOR GREG FISCHER

## LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



**LOUISVILLE, LIKE OTHER CITIES** across the country, experiences an overrepresentation of Black men and boys in the criminal justice system, caught in a cycle of violence instead of living out their dreams. And while

we know that education is the key to success, it is also true that many young Black boys with less opportunity show up for kindergarten three years behind thriving kids and rarely catch up. We are working to change that in Louisville. We start with kindergarten readiness programs and encourage mentoring, even allowing our city employees to use two hours of their work week to mentor young people.

There are system-level changes that must be made in order to lead us to not only equity but ultimately justice. In today's world, we cannot afford to ignore these equity issues. Inattention will be detrimental for us all. In places where we can't win the moral argument, we certainly can win the economic one. For those who believe raising up boys and men of color is not their work, look at the impact in cities where the dams have broken and the pain has spilled over. Ask those city leaders how many conferences were cancelled, conventions relocated, businesses established elsewhere. We are in this together.

In Louisville, the work of lifting up Black men and boys is led by the recently created Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods, an office that is intentionally positioned in the Office of the Mayor. We work to ensure that a significant portion of the summer jobs created through our public-private partnerships are held by boys of color. We acknowledge there is a sense of manhood

and dignity in holding a job and being able to provide for oneself. Coding classes are offered in our community centers, providing a skill set that will hopefully open a door that once was closed. We also provide conflict resolution and support restorative justice classes.

We know that forming partnerships with national and local organizations like the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, Casey Family Programs, National League of Cities, Louisville Urban League, Metro United Way, and My Brother's Keeper allow us to implement our local place-based initiatives, like "Zones Of Hope," designed to work with communities and systems to create better outcomes for our Black men and boys. Our work is informed by boys and men of color, our citizens on the neighborhood basketball court, and those presiding over the courts of justice. Felons, students, and professors from our distinguished universities are all at the table. We are in this together.

As mayors and leaders, regardless of our skin color or party, we have the opportunity to convene stakeholders to connect a city and rid the hopeless feeling that so many of our young Black men and boys experience.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. asked more than 40 years ago, "Where do we go from here?" Regardless of your answer to this question, it is clear that we will all go together. We are inextricably intertwined and the success of one is dependent upon the success of the whole. I am, indeed, my brother's keeper.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS IN BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT

## IN ADDITION TO THE WORK OF PHILANTHROPY,

municipal governments across the country are making substantial investments in supporting Black men and boys. For example, the Omaha African-American Male Achievement Coalition—which includes the city, county, school district, and 20 community organizations—set specific goals to improve outcomes for Black males. One goal is to increase the number of young Black men engaged in work experience opportunities through Step-Up Omaha; to this end, the mayor allocated \$300,000 to the program.

Elsewhere, in Charlottesville, Virginia, the school district improved school suspension policies that disproportionately affected Black boys, while the city council implemented a “ban the box” policy for city job applications.

In Louisville, Kentucky, with support from the National League of Cities and Casey Family Programs, Mayor Greg Fischer has built strong public-private partnerships and created spaces to have honest and sometimes difficult

dialogue about how best to support Black men and boys. As an initial step, Fischer built a wide-ranging coalition, the Louisville Cities United Collaboration (LCUC), a collaborative of more than 60 community and faith-based organizations working to reduce violence-related deaths of African-American males, increase educational and employment outcomes for young Black men and boys, and change the narrative.

Out of this collaborative, in September 2014, the city created a place-based strategy called “Zones of Hope.” Zones of Hope are designed to restore a sense of place and connection for some of Louisville’s most “disconnected” Black men and boys. Zones of Hope are built on four core objectives: family and community wellness (heart), academic readiness and achievement (head), career readiness as a life investment (hands), and restorative justice (hope). Zones of Hope hosts monthly meetings in each zone and has already received a \$226,400 grant from the James Graham Brown Foundation to build out the initiative.





## VOICES FROM THE FIELD

# TONYA ALLEN

## PRESIDENT & CEO, SKILLMAN FOUNDATION



**AT A MARCH MEETING IN DETROIT**, a number of stakeholders committed to improving outcomes for young men of color sat around a table, sharing the one word they felt defines how they're experiencing the

beginning of citywide work on the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative.

Adults shared words such as “powerful,” “encouraged,” and “committed.” All good things to hear.

When it came time for the one youth participant, a senior from Detroit's East Village Preparatory High School, to share, he paused and said quietly, “I just feel loved.”

That's one of the best things I've heard in a long time. I want all young men of color in Detroit and across the nation to know, without a doubt, they are important to our future, they are worthy of our investment, and they are indeed loved.

As president & CEO of The Skillman Foundation, chair of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, and co-chair of the nationally focused Executives' Alliance alongside Bob Ross from The California Endowment, I have the honor of being in a position to drive what's happening locally, in my city of Detroit, as well as across the country.

What I see—and what I try to push—is a swelling momentum. In Detroit, stakeholders are meeting on an urgent schedule to create a citywide plan to improve outcomes for these young men. That plan will include four platforms for action—education, health, workforce development, and safety. I'm encouraged to see who is at the table; they include not just longtime partners who have

devoted decades to this work and know it well, but also new partners, including representatives from the city's business sector, bringing unique ideas, energy, and resources.

In late spring, in accordance with the White House's MBK playbook, Detroit will host a summit to share the final report of policy analyses and recommendations with the community. By 2020, our goal is to see graduation rates for young men of color reach 90 percent in the city of Detroit. In the six neighborhoods where we work in Detroit, we've already seen these rates go up almost 20 percent since 2008. With the right intention and alignment of community partners, we know we can reach this mark.

Nationally, because of concerted efforts like the Campaign for Black Achievement, I've seen scores of foundations and corporations commit to work toward the same goals. This alignment of actions has the potential to address disparities affecting young men of color in an unprecedented way.

Overall, in Detroit and across the country, I see two concurrent threads. One is a recognition that we must change the narrative and recognize that these young men are assets. The other is the recognition that our young men, these assets, are in many ways hurting. What I see is an America that is enmeshed in a crucial moment, where young men of color need our collective action more than ever. They deserve our support and our commitment.

They deserve our love.



# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Foundation funding for Black men and boys is growing. Indeed, between 2010 and 2012 foundation giving explicitly designated for Black men and boys more than doubled from \$28.6 million to \$64.6 million. Still, this is a small portion of overall philanthropic giving, which tops \$50 billion a year. Moreover, the issues facing Black men and boys are systemic and far-reaching, requiring long-term, targeted, and strategic investments.

In particular, the data lift up a number of gaps in the field, offering opportunities for greater philanthropic support. Recommendations for future investments include:

- **INCREASED FUNDING IN THE AREA OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS, PARTICULARLY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.** African-American men have the lowest life expectancy and highest mortality rate compared to other population groups in the United States; yet only 4 percent of foundation funding went to health.
- **INCREASED FUNDING IN THE SOUTH.** Southern states have the largest concentration of Black male residents, yet funding is not proportionate to the numbers there.
- **INCREASED FUNDING FOR GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT.** The vast majority of grants support programs, with only 15 percent of grants awarded for general support. To strengthen capacity and promote sustainability in the field, funding for general operating support is critical.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As new foundation, government, and corporate-supported initiatives take root, the field is poised to make substantial progress in improving life

outcomes for Black men and boys. Leading the charge is the **Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA)**. At the start of 2015, CBMA spun off as its own independent entity following seven years as an initiative of the Open Society Foundations. As CBMA grows its network of more than 2,200 organizations, it holds the potential to build field capacity and to coordinate a strategic, cohesive agenda to move the work forward in significant ways.

In addition to the work of CBMA, the **Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color** is also helping to catalyze coordination and increase investments in the field. Launched in 2013 with 26 foundation presidents, the group now boasts more than 40 national, regional, and community foundations that are creating pathways and opportunities for boys and men of color to succeed, while advancing a comprehensive vision and longer-term agenda.

In February 2015, the Alliance announced the launch of **RISE (Research, Integration, Strategy, and Evaluation) for Boys and Men of Color**, an effort to understand more fully the strategies that improve life outcomes for males of color in the areas of education, health, criminal justice, and economic opportunity and workforce development. The Atlantic Philanthropies, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation are investing \$8.5 million into this \$10 million, three-year collaborative, which will help advance evidence-based practice in the field.

Like the Executives' Alliance, ABFE's **Black Male Funders Leadership and Action Network** connects funders that are directing resources to initiatives that improve life outcomes for Black men and boys. In February 2015, this network met at Tougaloo College, the site of a former slave plantation in Jackson, Mississippi. In this historic setting, a community of more than 30 philanthropic practitioners shared insights, challenges, and opportunities.

In addition to national efforts, foundations are also connecting with one another on a state level. The California Executives' Alliance, for example, consists of 20 foundations focusing on statewide coordination of efforts. These foundations have committed to aligning their efforts, resources, and influence to improve the lives of boys and men of color in California and, among other goals, have decided to work collectively on increasing opportunities for young men of color to achieve stable, full-time employment with earnings above 300% federal poverty level. In Minnesota, philanthropic organizations created the MBK Funders' Learning Table, which gives funders an opportunity to learn from each other's work and connect to the national My Brother's Keeper initiative.

Collectively, these efforts demonstrate that foundations are heeding the call for coordinated strategy and investments, so that limited resources can have the greatest impact possible.



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## ABOUT FOUNDATION CENTER

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## ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN FOR BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT

Established in 2008 as an initiative of the Open Society Foundations, the Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA) is a national membership network that seeks to ensure the growth, sustainability, and impact of leaders and organizations committed to improving the life outcomes of Black men and boys. In 2015, CBMA spun off from the Open Society Foundations as an independent entity and supports a growing network of more than 3,300 individuals representing more than 2,200 organizations across the country.

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